

From: [Turner, Philip](#)
To: [Ruhl, Christopher](#)
Cc: [Enders, Jhana](#)
Subject: RE: Amarillo Phosphine - Laboratory Questions
Date: Wednesday, February 22, 2017 10:31:00 AM

No thoughts really... only that it certainly seems plausible/reasonable to me that increasing volume would do the trick... as long as the necessary volume itself does not become a hindrance to the analysis

From: Ruhl, Christopher
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2017 9:56 AM
To: Turner, Philip
Cc: Enders, Jhana
Subject: FW: Amarillo Phosphine - Laboratory Questions
Phil-
Please look at #4. Thoughts
Chris Ruhl
USEPA R6 Emergency Response Team Leader
Federal On Scene Coordinator
(214) 665-7356 office

From: Ojeda, Jose [<mailto:Jose.Ojeda@WestonSolutions.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2017 8:21 AM
To: Ruhl, Christopher <Ruhl.Christopher@epa.gov>; Enders, Jhana <Enders.Jhana@epa.gov>
Subject: Amarillo Phosphine - Laboratory Questions

Chris,

Below are the laboratory's response (**bold blue**) to the questions from yesterday's conference call:

- 1) Our client is concerned that the method detection limit of 13 µg/m³ listed on page 4 of 15 under section 1.2.2 was not achieved. Would it be possible for you to report the results to include your Method Detection Limit (MDL) not just the Report Limit (RL)?

a. Unfortunately, we do not have the option to report lower than our current Reporting Limit for OSHA 1003 method. The current reporting limit has been established based on historical experience with this method and media background interferences.

- 2) Please provide a detailed explanation of why phosphorus was detected above the RL in the Laboratory Media Blank (LMB) at 6.15 µg/sample? The phosphorous concentration present in the LMB is very similar to detections in the samples thus making the validity of the data questionable.

a. On occasion, we do see background contamination on the media which can vary from lot to lot. I believe we sent the media for the project and also

used the same media lot for the quality control. Assuming your sample PH3-FB-28012017-85 filter came from the same lot as the one used by our laboratory, the levels found are in line with our laboratory LMB result. If

needed, we can field blank correct the samples.

3) If the site was re-sampled what are the chances that the Laboratory Reagent Blank (LRB) and/or LMB would again show phosphorus contamination?

a. The reagent blank was non-detect down to our reporting limit. I would not expect this outcome to be any different on the next round of samples. However, depending on the lot used for the treated media (LMB and QC), there exist the possibility that there may be some inherent contamination from lot to lot.

4) Would it be possible to lower the MDL and/or RL by increasing the sample volume above the 240L and/or training filters?

a. The only variable available to adjust is the collection volume. The OSHA 1003 method recommends a maximum collection volume of 240 L. Based on the recipe provide within the method, I calculated a theoretical maximum loading of 4 mg/sample of phosphine that can be collected on the treated media. Meaning, based on the levels reported, there appears to be room to extend the collection volume beyond the 240 L recommended maximum. I would strongly recommend someone double check my calculation based on the follow parameters:

A solution of 4.0 g of mercuric chloride and a small amount of methyl orange in 40.0 mL of 95:5 (v/v) methanol/glycerol was prepared. Caution: Mercuric chloride is a poison and slightly volatile at ordinary temperature. Forty cleaned filters were placed on a clean glass plate and, using an Eppendorf pipet with a plastic tip, 0.95 mL of the mercuric chloride solution was applied to each filter. $\text{PH}_3 + 3\text{HgCl}_2 \rightarrow \text{P}(\text{HgCl})_3 + 3\text{HCl}$



José L. Ojeda

Senior Project Leader – START

Weston Solutions, Inc.

3900 Dallas Pkwy, Suite 175

Plano, TX 75093-7805

Direct: (469) 666-5506 • Cell: (619) 417-3298 • Office: (469) 666-5500 • Fax: (469) 666-5540

Jose.Ojeda@westonsolutions.com

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